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The Bombay Guardian.

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SATURDAY, MARCH 10, 1866.

Weekly Review of Occurrences and Opinions.

The *Scotsman* has entertained its readers with a report of a mock-trial, in which Dr. Norman MacLeod is represented as having committed a murderous assault upon the person of Mr. Moses Law. A witness named Orthodoxy testified that Dr MacLeod found Mr. Law in the pulpit, struck him with a logic-chopper on the head and threw him lifeless out of the pulpit. The line of defence pursued was the denial that Mr. Law was alive at the time he was struck. Witnesses were called to prove that Moses Law had been killed by the Apostle Paul, had been dead these eighteen centuries. This is all very well, but let us be careful not to misrepresent Paul or the New Testament. Does any one seriously regard Paul as having denied the everlasting obligation of the commands, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not worship images? Paul believed the commandments of the decalogue to be expressive of the will of the unchangeable God, and in his epistles he abundantly exhorts the Christians whom he addresses to walk in conformity with the law. There is indeed a most important sense in which the law is dead relatively to Christians, as he declares, Romans VII. We may not rely on it as a means of justification. No man is saved by virtue of his conformity to it. The law condemns us all. What the Law could not do, namely, justify us, God accomplishes by means of the cross of Christ. Because we are justified, do we therefore part company with the law? Because Christ has died, is the law, Thou shalt not covet, abrogated? We are told by Paul himself that the covetous shall not enter the kingdom of heaven. The fact is, the decalogue was given to the Jews from Sinai and with more or less of Jewish phraseology, but the ten commandments were given to "man" from the beginning. There never was a time when men were not under obligation to refrain from theft, murder, adultery, and idolatry. Cain knew that he was a law-breaker when he slew his brother. And it is because the Sabbath was given to mankind from the beginning, and is mentioned in the very fore-front of Scripture, that it was included in the de[illegible] Temple.

—'The Exeter Hall Howlings.' The *Pioneer* has an article under this heading. It is not very clear what tribe of animals Exeter Hall belongs to. Mr. Owen ought to be consulted on the subject. It is a disgrace to the age that this question in Natural History is left unsettled. Macauley used to speak of the *bringing* of Exeter Hall. This shows what his conception of the beast was. But we are told that the animal howls: that it is not an ass at all: in fact, it is a wolf. This alters the case considerably. Possibly the metamorphoses are not ended. The change is, so far, rather alarming; and there is reason to believe that the Anthropological Society has started into existence for the very purpose of defending the age from this formidable creature.

—The Exeter-Hall sect indulges, we are told, in a morbid, spurious, hypocritical deification of the black man and brother. Here we see the wolf, and something of the fox intermingled. What a depth of depravity in this. Nebuchadnezzar made a golden image for men to worship; the Roman Cæsars deified themselves; but the Exeter Hall men have proposed to themselves to make the universal white race bow down to the black man. Captain Bedford Pim, amid the cheers of the Anthropological Society, declares 'that there is only one opinion as to the *innate cruelty* of the negro, his *sensuality*, his *brutality*, his *sloth*.' The climax is rather tame. After cruelty, sensuality, and brutality, laziness makes but a poor appearance. Mr. Pim says that the slave trade laid the foundations of England's commercial greatness, and claims for civilized man the right to compel inferior black races to work for him. The Anthropological Society gave three cheers for Governor Eyre before they separated. If Exeter Hall is the wolf (how very vulpine to call the black man man brother) the Anthropological Society is doubtless the lamb. And ex-Governor Eyre is no doubt a turtle-dove.

—China continues to be a prey to disorders, and the foreigners resident there come in for their full share of danger and loss. Hongkong is virtually blockaded by pirates, and only large craft succeed in entering and leaving the port. The piratical junks are replaced as fast as they are destroyed. In the North the Taepings have been replaced by the Nienfei; and Hankow is threatened [illegible] on Pekin. The Emperor of China might be spoken of as 'the sick man' with more propriety than the Sultan was. A considerable portion of the Imperial Army is [illegible]

—We have been this week reminded of the liberality of Cowasjee Jehangeer Esq., in giving two laks toward the erection of a building for the Elphinstone College, by the ceremony of laying the corner stone. The site is in Byculla about 3¼ miles from the Fort. The building is to cost 5½ lacks.

When John the Baptist came preaching baptism, he was under no necessity of explaining to his hearers what baptism was. They were familiar with the rite as that by which proselytes from among the Gentiles were received into the fold of Judaism: lepers too, who, under the Mosaic code were like Gentiles in respect to religious privileges, could, when cured, be restored to the standing of Jewish worshippers, only by means of baptism. It was thus, to the Jews, significant of a great change, the greatest with which they were acquainted, that change of heart and life by which a heathen became a member of the household of Israel. Bearing this in mind, it becomes evident that the proclaimed necessity of baptism in order that Jews themselves, God's chosen people, could be received into the Messiah's kingdom, must have struck the hearers of John very forcibly, and given them very exalted conceptions of the Messianic kingdom which was about to appear. And they would at once perceive the harmony between the declaration of this necessity and the preaching of John as to the necessity of repentence (a change of heart) and a new life; and be prepared for the solemn announcement concerning the trial by fire which awaited the candidates of this kingdom. In like manner, our Lord amazed Nicodemus by the statement that even he, a ruler of the Jews, was incapable of seeing the kingdom of heaven unless he should be born again of water and of the Spirit. That which is born of the Spirit is spirit; and he that is born of the Spirit is one who will not refuse to undergo the great humiliation (such to a Jew) of entering by baptism the kingdom of the Messiah. When our Lord by his death had opened the kingdom of God to all believers, he commanded his disciples to baptize all converts, whether from among Jews or Gentiles; in this again startling them; for they would naturally have expected that Gentile proselytes should first be received into the Jewish community and then pass into the church of Christ.

We have received the Report of the Ahmedabad Mission (connected with the Irish Presbyterian Mission,) for 1865. This Mission is in charge of the Rev. Dunlop Moore. There are 56 baptized adults in connection with this Mission; six of these were baptized [illegible]. The native church has shown a spirit of liberality in the contributions made for the Mission. In one day Rs. 117-13, was contributed. The Christian settlement at Shahwadi (contiguous to Ahmedabad) numbers 138 souls.

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The following statement is encouraging, as it shows that the church-members are determined to have nothing to do with caste:

"A young man belonging to a neighbouring village has for some time been in the habit of coming to listen at the religious services held in the school-room. He is of the Shenwo caste, which stands intermediate between Dhers and Sweepers. At first, he was content to sit at the door, though encouraged to enter the room. But he gave good heed to the instructions which he heard, and has proved intelligent, and very apt to learn, and is now familiar with the leading doctrines of the Bible. When he heard of the collection, he, to the surprise of every one, brought half a rupee. Some reluctance was shown to accept the money, and he was told not to give what he could not well afford. But he would take no refusal, and appeared right glad when his contribution was received. He himself will, is it hoped, soon be admitted to the fellowship of the church. And with great satisfaction we mention it that the Christians who belonged formerly to high castes have openly expressed the joy it would afford them to receive this poor despised Shenwo as a brother in the Lord. His intelligence and satisfactory outward appearance, and still more, we trust, his future Christian life ought to evince the unreasonableness of the interdict by which high-caste countrymen would exclude him from the common rights of humanity."

With regard to Evangelistic Operations, this Report says:—

"We have the satisfaction of reporting an increase of native helpers. One of the catechists resides with the Missionary in Ahmedabad. The other three remain for the present at Shahawadi. In Ahmedabad and in the villages around Shahewadi the Gospel has been very frequently preached both by the Missionary and the native agents. Tours too have been made by them in various directions, and the good seed of the word has been scattered far and wide. In the town of Nériad there are some promising inquirers who are diligent in the study of the Christian Scriptures. We wish to station a Catechist permanently in that important centre of operations. But in the present mood of the inhabitants, and with the determination to keep Christians out of their town, it is impossible to obtain a house in it is their to rent or purchase."

The Report mentions

"That the Directors of the Mission have signified their intention to erect buildings in Ahmedabad for an Educational Institute, and for the accomodation of one or more Missionaries. Special contributions for this object will be thankfully received."

A day was set apart for humiliation and prayer by vice-regal proclamation, in Victoria and New South Wales, in view, especially, of the long-continued drought. It seems to have been very generally observed. The Melbourne *Argus* has notices of the services in about 50 churches. Attention seems to have been drawn at the same time to the necessity of reservoirs as a means of guarding against the effects of these frequent droughts.

From the notice of a discourse preached at Sydney on the above occasion, we take the following:—

"The facts of human history attested that there was a God in the earth. But he was not addressing sceptics, for such would not be there, mocking God, by taking part in the present service when they believed that their penitence could neither affect God nor the course of human affairs. Let them, then, look at the declarations of God's holy word on the subject. All through the Old and New Testaments the believer felt himself to be walking with a God of Providence. What was the book of Genesis but a record of God's special providence to the patriarchs? What was the book of Exodus but a history of the special providence of God to the Israelites? Judges, Samuel, Kings, Chronicles, the histories given in the prophets, were all records of the same thing; while in the New Testament the Christian was taught that God fed the ravens and clothed lilies. The man who believed in Christ must believe that there is a God who judges in the earth, and that that God is pervading by His presence, swaying by His power, directing by His wisdom, blessing by His holiness and love the human family, and specially His own children. The divine Providence extends to nature. God sends the streams in the valleys; and He hath not left himself without witnesses, in that He has sent us fruitful seasons filling our hearts with food and gladness. God is above all, through all, and in all. Every good and perfect gift is from above, and cometh from the Father of Lights, in whom there is no variableness, neither shadow or turning. He did not deny that we could not trace the direct connection between our prayers and the sending of rain upon the earth, and that prayer could not be taken up as an appreciable element by the natural philosopher in the region of physics or of climatology: but, however uniform the laws of nature and the links of cause and effect, was it not possible that the Great First Cause might pervade all other causes, and yet so that the human eye could not trace the lines of its course? Man could only trace cause and effect between certain limits above or below which the mysterious and unperceived powers of God might operate. It was the very highest style of piety, and the result of profound investigations, that brought men like Newton or Chalmers back to the simplicity of a little child, trusting, loving, and believing in God. He was not able to perceive how God could interfere with the laws of evaporation, or with the currents of the atmosphere bearing the moisture-laden clouds, and how He could cause them to refresh the parched earth; but he believed that in ages past He had done it, that in ages to come He would do it, and that even now in answer to prayer He could command the clouds to pour down the moisture that should give verdure to the earth and life and joy to our souls."

ARABIA has for many centuries been regarded as distinctively a Mahomedan country. If we are to believe Mr. Palgrave it is anything but that. Referring to the revelations of his book, the *Bombay Gazette* says:—

"Mahomedanism has been rejected by Arabia as preseveringly as by Rajpootana or by Spain. Of course the western shores of the peninsula, containing the famous places of Mahomedan pilgrimage, are frequented by the devotees of this religion, and remain under the charge of guardians who profess it: to wit, the Sultans of Turkey and their deputies. Again, the empire of the Wahabees, which is fanatically Mussulman, certainly exercises great political power from its central capital Riad, over the neighbouring States, and enforces a certain external respect to the Mussulman name. But with these two exceptions, it is certain that a vast majority of the people of Arabia are not Mahomedans either by conviction or profession, and never were. The people of the more northern States were formerly Christian, until the time of Mahomed himself, since which they have externally conformed to his law; their bias and preference being now rather in favour of the still older and mystical form of belief to which the Arabs generally everywhere adhere in heart, and which is still the religion of the greater part of the inhabitants of the peninsula; namely, Sabaism, or star-worship,—a creed once very widely spread over the East, but which was generally believed hitherto to be extinct. It existed in full sway twelve hundred years ago in the days of Mahomed, and he made an unsuccessful attempt to subvert it; but its origin and nature are alike obscure. It seems to be connected with the religion of the Persians, and yet distinct; and in all probability approached more nearly that of the old Chaldeans, or was actually derived from it. The Sabeans worship the sun and the planets, but not fire; and they regard as sacred the two larger pyramids in Egypt, which they hold to be the burial-places of the Patriarch Seth and his son Saba, the founder of their system."

"The last lingering place of this primeval form of superstition is Eastern and Central Arabia, and more particularly the kingdom of Oman on the coast of the Persian Gulf, a territory extending for about a thousand miles along the seaboard, and it is much to be wished in the interest of science that some of our *savans*, learned in archaic lore would take this very accessible country, which is only a few days' sails from Bombay, and freely open to travelers, on their route, and obtain some details of what yet remains extant of a decaying creed once professed by most of the nations of the East. The Sultan of [illegible] Imaum of Muscat; the office of high priest being attached to that of civil ruler by the old Sabean traditions, which recognise no separate priesthood. The country contains some three millions of inhabitants, and is well governed and well ruled, the Sultan having a revenue estimated by Mr. Palgrave at something over a million sterling annually. The foreign trade is considerable, especially with India, and the State possesses a navy of some strength built at different ports on our own shores. The people are descended mainly from the old Arab stock anterior to the Abramic settlements, and have been from the first open and unyielding antagonists to the faith of Islam, which, however, is now tolerated among them, as all other religions are; and among their other peculiarities is a most extensive and credulous use of magic arts, fostered no doubt by the negroes, who contribute a quarter of the population, but not less certainly forming part of the original education of the nation as they received it from their forefathers. The present Queen is said to be an enthusiastic adept in these arts."

Can we accept these conclusions? There are always Arabs from the coast of Omau, in the bazaars of Bombay, and they were never suspected, we believe, of being any thing but staunch Mahomedans; it is, then, rather staggering to be told that Mahomedism is merely a tolerated religion among the three millions of Oman, and the worship of the heavenly bodies the prevalent religion of the country. There are men among us to whom Arabia is not altogether a *terra incognita*; and there are documents in Bombay that embody information concerning even those portions of Arabia which Mr. Palgrave is said to have discovered. There was a gentlemen is the service of the Bombay Government thirty years ago, who at that time traversed Arabia from East to West, spending some time at the capital of the Wahabees. His journal has hitherto remained unpublished, but it is the intention of the Bombay Government, we believe, to publish it without delay; it will probably tend to modify some of the views that Mr. Palgrave's work has given rise to. His work is a most agreeable one, and he has undoubtedly communicated a great deal of valuable information; we are not at all prepared to deny all that he says about the remaining Sabaism of Arabia; but neither can we accept all his statements on the subject until some additional evidence has been furnished.

NOTES FROM AN INTERLEAVED BIBLE.—Matt. V. 41. 'Go with him twain.' Painful to do things under compulsion. Do them with acquiescence, serving the Lord in them cheerfully, and then there is no more compulsion; it is voluntary.

42. There is a connection betyeen 'Ask and it shall be given you,' and 'Give to him that asketh of thee.' We are to give with faith in his love. It is not that he is indifferent to our losses; we will abundantly compensate. A sufficient sense of his love will make all these injuries (39-42) bearable. How great the obligation to know his love.

45. That ye may be able to say, 'Our Father who art in heaven.' He maketh his sun &c. My Father worketh hitherto and I work. If our poor efforts for the good of men are without results, consider the floods of divine goodness poured round all sinners from on high, with no more results. God does not desist. This shows his work is important. Good to have fellowship with him in unsuccessful charity. The whole creation groans, yet hopes.

There is to be an analogy between the conduct of the church and the course of divine providence.

48. Be ye therefore diffusive of goodness, even as the sun is.

VI. 1. We should study to hear the approving voice of God, feed upon his commendations, look for his smile in everything we

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